

REMARKS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-20 are pending. Claims 1, 11 and 16 have been amended to further define the invention. In particular, each of these independent claims now recites several features in more detail. Each claim recites that the belt forms a top path between a first roller and a second roller end with *the material falling off the second end*. Each claim also recites that *the material inlet has a width in the forward direction that is at least half of the top conveying path length between the ends*. A review of the drawings will illustrate that in the preferred embodiment, the inlet spans nearly the entire length of the conveying path. In fact, this is an advantage of the invention, in that the conveyer can be made relatively shorter compared to prior art conveyers. As described in paragraph 6, in the background of the invention of the present application, belt feeders normally need a long belt path so that the material does not free flow over the path. The present invention permits the case of the shorter belt length, which reduces the size of the overall feeder.

Each of the independent claims has further been amended to recite that the *hinged moveable plate is located proximate to the second end*. This is another significant feature of the invention, and in fact is related to the short conveying length of the preferred embodiment. As described in paragraph 6, in the background of the invention of the present application, belt feeders normally need a long belt path so that the material does not free flow over the path. The present invention overcomes this problem, as described in paragraphs 28 and 29 of the specification by providing the pivoting door which is located near the second end of the feeder.

Accordingly, the present invention is able to provide a *more compact belt length* than the prior art (e.g., the inlet width in the feeding direction is over half the length of the belt) and further *free flow of material which would otherwise occur with such a short belt path length is avoided by virtue of the pivoting door, which is located proximate to the drop off end of the feed path.*

It is respectfully submitted that these features are neither taught nor suggested by the references used in the rejections in the office action.

Turning to the Office Action, claims 1, 11 and 16 were rejected as being indefinite. In response, the language identified by the Examiner has been reviewed, and been amended.

Turning to the rejections of the independent claims and several dependent claims as being anticipated by Sackett '669, and the rejection of claim 5 as being unpatentable over Sackett '669 in view of Lovette '261, as well as the rejections of claims 9 and 10 as being unpatentable over Sackett '669 in view of Clancy '852 and further in view of Stock '518, these rejections are respectfully traversed as follows.

As discussed above, without conceding the propriety of the rejections, each of the independent claims as amended recite: (1) the short feed conveyer feed length relative to the inlet, and (2) the movable plate located proximate to the second end of the belt, and (3) inhibiting free flow of material over the belt so it does not flow at a speed greater than the belt speed.

These features are not taught or suggested by the above references, whether taken singularly or in combination. FIG. 1 of Sackett '699 shows a bin 1 which feeds material onto a conveyer 2. Sackett '669 is deficient with respect to the amended claims for these

three reasons. First, the conveyer 2 of Sackett extends a significant distance away from the lower inlet portion of the hopper 1. Thus, Sackett '669 does not suggest a compact conveyer as claimed with the width of the copper in the conveying direction is at least half of the path length of the belt. Second, Sackett '669 is not seen to disclose or suggest locating the movable plate as claimed. The un-numbered hinged item near switch 6 is not located near the second or discharge end of the belt. The guide 14 is not located above the conveyer belt, but rather is to the right of it, and further does not have a fixed plate adjacent to it. Third, there is no suggestion or teaching in this reference of inhibiting the free flow of material over the belt at a speed greater than the belt speed.

For at least these reasons, The amended independent claims are believed patentable over Sackett '669. Moreover, Lovett '261, Clancy '852, and Stock '518 are not seen to overcome the deficiencies of Sackett 669.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of the application proved in order and such action is earnestly solicited.

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AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. § 1.116
EXPEDITED PROCEDURE

Should the Examiner believe that a telephone conference would expedite issuance of the application, the Examiner is respectfully invited to telephone the undersigned attorney at (202) 861-1696.

Respectfully submitted,

BAKER & HOSTETLER LLP

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Leo J. Jennings", is written over the printed name.

Leo J. Jennings
Registration No. 32,902

Washington Square, Suite 1100
1050 Connecticut Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036-5304
Telephone: 202/861-1500
Facsimile: 202/861-1783
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